

Managing Eldercare Responsibilities

SupportLinc Employee Assistance
Program (EAP)

Penn State Health



Disclaimer

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Objectives

This training is designed to help you understand:

- The journey of aging
- Aging and the family conversation
- Senior services
- Accessing the needs of seniors - IADL and ADL - activities of daily living
- Stay at home
- Local and long-distance caregiving
- Choices of senior care
- Community and support resources
- Home care services
- Alternative housing options
- Geriatric care managers/advocates
- Long term care planning and legal issues
- Who pays for eldercare services?
- Additional resources

The journey of aging

How does one think of aging later in life?








- Often overwhelming and daunting
- Have a conversation with parents and seniors to use services
- Normal aging – what is ageism?
- The acceptance of aging
- See if the goal for your senior is to maintain their independence for as long as possible and if their preference is to stay at home

The family conversation

- Pay attention to habits, passions and strengths
- Be sensitive
- Listen to seniors' needs and wants
- Be supportive and patient
- Include doctor
- NEVER be pushy or forceful
- Be creative
- Family mediations as necessary
- Keep your senior active



Senior services options

-  • Community resources
-  • Housing
-  • Transportation
-  • Financial
-  • Aging in place – home security and improvements
-  • Counseling – loneliness/depression
-  • Legal services

Assessing the needs of seniors

Independent living activities

- Using the telephone
- Doing light or heavy housework/cleaning
- Preparing meals
- Shopping for groceries or errands
- Light bookkeeping
- Drive to doctors

Personal care activities

- Bathing/showering/personal care
- Dressing
- Eating
- Getting in or out of bed/chairs
- Using the toilet
- Walk/climb stairs
- Cognitive/making appropriate decisions
- Can the senior be left alone safely?

Aging in place

- Staying in a familiar place where your senior has a close network of nearby family, friends and neighbors/community
- Wide range of home care services that can help seniors maintain their independence
- Seniors are often more comfortable with what they know
- There is often more privacy than senior living facilities

Aging in place is only realistic if:

- Transportation is easily accessible, including alternatives to driving
- Neighborhood is safe
- Home and yard maintenance is not overwhelming
- Physical and medical needs do not require a high level of care

Changes to their home

- Home repairs or modifications make aging in place safer or easier
- Start with a home assessment and consider:
 - A wheelchair ramp
 - Reinforced support bars in bathroom
 - A shower seat
 - Additional lighting
 - Handheld grabber
 - Widening hallways/doorways
 - First-floor living
 - Emergency response system



Local and distance caregiving

- Understand your family's strengths and weaknesses regarding senior care
- Caregiving statistics
- Unpaid caregiving statistics
- Many children don't live near their elders
- Advance planning is extremely important
- Know when to step in
- Have a plan for emergencies
- Tips for visiting a doctor
- Effect on your job
- Caregiver stress



When considering caregiving



Some concerns include:

- Prevention of falls
- Driving
- Depression and isolation of the elderly
- Managing caregiver stress
- Remembering medications
- After-hospitalization care
- Lack of geriatricians nationally

Choices in senior care

What kind of care and how much care can be provided at home:

Community resources

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Home care options

Alternative housing options

Resources and support

- Senior centers and aging in place organizations
- Telephone reassurance
- Medical management reminder systems
- Transportation services
- Video conferencing
- Meal delivery programs
- Friendly visitor/telephone reassurance
- Grocery delivery
- Cleaning services
- Errand services
- Home maintenance
- Adult day care
- Emergency Response System



Home care services



- Homemakers/Companions
- Home Health Aide
- Personal Care Aides
- Certified Nursing Aide (CNA)
- Registered Nurse
- Physical Therapists

Levels of home care services

Custodial care:

Assistance with ADL's (activities of daily living).

Companion care:

No ADL care, but companionship, errands and light housekeeping.

Skilled care:

Medical care that requires the services of a skilled professional (Nurse, Physical, Occupational or Speech Therapist).

Sub-acute:

Comprehensive inpatient care designed for someone who has an acute illness, injury or exacerbation of a disease process.



Housing options

- **Adult Care Facilities:** Provides room, board and in-home support services to six or more non-related adults.
- **Residential Care Facilities:** A group residence that provides each resident with, at a minimum, assistance with bathing, dressing and help with medications 24-hours a-day and may provide medical services.
- **Assisted Living Facilities:** For those who need a wide range of in-home support services to help them with activities of daily living but do not require the level of continuous nursing care that a nursing home offers. They may have their own private apartment and are self-contained, with their own bedroom, bathroom, small kitchen and living area. There are common areas for socializing with other residents.
- **Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC):** Provides a comprehensive, lifetime range of services, to include housing, residential services and nursing care. Housing is part of one campus setting and your senior moves from one level of care to another as level of care needs to be increased.



Alternative housing options

- A Place for Mom - Assisted Living & Nursing Home Placement
- Placing an elder in the right nursing home or assisted living facility quickly can improve health outcomes
 - What kind of lifestyle does senior want?
 - How close would he/she like to be to family and friends, doctors, pharmacies, other medical facilities, shopping, senior centers, religious facilities and other amenities?
 - How much will the housing option cost?

Geriatric care managers

- Advocate for clients care throughout the continuum of care at home
- Assess in-home medical needs/vet home health aides
- Coordinate a move
- Counseling, support and education
- Conduct/find support groups
- Perform assessments and formulate care plans
- Can provide short or long term assistance
- Screen, arrange and monitor home care services
- Review and recommend resources for financial, legal, Medicaid applications and benefit requirements
- Can work with a hospital or long or short-term facility discharge planner

Long-term care planning

The best way to prevent a crisis is to plan for it. Plan for the needs of elders before a care transition happens:

- Health Care Proxy
- Wills
- Power of Attorney
- Probate
- Trusts
- Advanced Directives
- Elder Law
- Estate Planning



Paying for eldercare services

- Private Pay
- Long Term Care Insurance
- Medicaid
- Medicare - Advantage and Medicare Supplemental Insurance
 - The myth that destroys so many lives is that the government will take care of everything when we are old and frail. People believe that Medicare covers everything connected to long term care, when the truth is that Medicare does not even adequately cover acute care properly.
- Veteran's Benefits

Helpful resources

<https://eldercare.acl.gov>

www.aarp.org

www.medicare.gov

www.va.gov

www.aafp.org

www.ageinplace.org

<https://homemods.org/>

www.alz.org

www.ssa.gov

Interactive toolkits

Mindfulness

www.mindfulness.tools

Practical tools and exercises for incorporating mindfulness into everyday life.

Meditation

www.meditate.tools

Easy-to-use collection of resources that includes guided meditations, tip sheets and more.

Resiliency

www.resiliency.tools

Skill development resources to help you 'bounce back' from challenging situations.

Sleep fitness

www.sleepfitness.tools

Information and resources to help you learn good sleep habits and achieve healthy sleep.

What is SupportLinc?

The SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a health benefit, separate from your medical insurance, offered by your employer to help you manage life's daily challenges.

SupportLinc can refer you to professional counselors, services and resources that will help you and your eligible family members resolve a broad range of personal and work-related concerns.

What services are included?

Work-life benefits



Legal consultation

Free in-person or telephonic consultation with a licensed attorney

No employment law



Dependent care referrals

Expert referrals to child and adult/elder care providers, facilities and other resources



Financial consultation

Expert guidance and consultation from financial professionals



“Convenience” referrals

Guidance and referrals to a variety of daily living resources: home improvement, entertainment services, pet care, auto repair, wellness, travel, handymen, volunteer opportunities etc.



Identity theft consultation

Free consultation with an identity theft recovery professionals

Tailored recovery action plan

Getting started



Call: 1-888-881-LINC (5462)



QR Code:



Visit: www.supportlinc.com



Log in or create account
(code: psh)

SupportLinc

Support for everyday issues. Every day.

Additional resources

Taking care of a senior as they age requires also making your own wellbeing a priority, so you can have enough energy to take care of them and yourself. You need to put on your own oxygen mask first before you can turn around and help others. There are many things you can do to reduce stress, which can help boost your physical and emotional health. Listed below are some techniques that you may find helpful as you practice ways to take care of yourself so you can better take care of those you love:

Get support from people you love and trust. Talking with people you feel safe with can help you process and feel more in control. If you have a supervisor, mentor or trusted colleague, they will be able to remind you of what typical responses are under these circumstances. They may also be able to help you be aware of certain challenges that may lie ahead.

Try not to compare yourself with others. Everyone reacts differently to exposure to others' suffering or traumatic experiences. There is no right or wrong way to deal with these events.

Set more boundaries during this stressful time. Say no when you can. Setting limits in your personal and professional life can help you conserve your energy and allow you time to regroup. By doing this, you will be able to keep things in better perspective. It is also important to be able to balance your time alone and the time you spend with supportive people.

Avoid using alcohol or nonprescription drugs to handle your emotions or to relax. Alcohol is a depressant and can make you feel more lethargic. Sugar, caffeine, and smoking can have an over-stimulating effect.

Take care of yourself. Eat well-balanced meals and make a point of getting enough sleep. Keep a bottle of water with you – it is easy to become dehydrated when you are under stress.

Exercise. Daily exercise can have tremendous benefits for both the body and mind. Even short walks can help if you take them regularly.

Practice deep breathing. Take breaks several times a day to breathe in slowly to a count of five, and out again to a count of five. This can help “unclench” both your body and mind.

Try to make your work area as comfortable and soothing as possible. Surroundings can make a difference in how you feel. If you have a workspace, make sure your chair is comfortable or that you have a soothing photograph or other picture to look at.

Write down your feelings. Some people find that it helps to write down their feelings, especially before they go to bed. You can then decide whether or not you want to share these thoughts and feelings with anyone else.

Consider joining a support group. Talking with other professionals who are dealing with similar experiences can be helpful, especially if you don't have supportive friends and family nearby.

Balance objectivity and empathy. If you become overly objective, you may come across as very detached or feel numb and may not be able to help your patient or client. If you become overly empathetic, you may cry or become outraged, which may lead the patient or client to feel that you are unable to help them. Therefore, maintaining a healthy balance is of the utmost importance.

Give yourself time. It's not a sign of personal weakness if you are experiencing compassion fatigue. Be patient with yourself and ask others to be patient with you. Telling people how they can help you will enable them to feel useful and will help you get what you actually need.

Know and honor your own limitations. There are moments when everyone needs a break. Take one before you need to. You won't be able to help others if you're too exhausted.

Remember to focus on the powerful impact you're having on the people you're helping. You are giving the gift of yourself. Take time for a well-deserved break, if needed. When you return, you may be better able to help others with your refreshed attitude and by having more energy and a different perspective. Treat yourself the way you treat your own patients or clients - with compassion, empathy and understanding, and you and everyone you come in contact with will greatly benefit.

Seek professional help if you are not yourself. It's important to seek professional help right away if you are experiencing overwhelming feelings of sadness, anger, or despair, if you feel like quitting your job immediately or if you are having thoughts of suicide. There is treatment for compassion fatigue and talking with a professional can help. Calling your EAP is a great place to start. If you are arguing with people, having trouble getting along with others, or are feeling more aggressive, irritable or frustrated than usual, seek help. Seek help if you are having trouble functioning well at work or at home, or if your personal relationships are suffering. Seek help if you are drinking more, abusing drugs, can't sleep or if you just “don't know what's wrong.”

For further resources, please go to your portal and use the search bar to type in “Compassion Fatigue Flash Course” and “Caregiver Stress Flash Course.”

Moving ahead



What did you get out of today's presentation?

Which concepts are working in your life and why?

Who can be a support for you to make change?

Which concepts are *not* working in your life and why?

What 3 ideas are going to be the most helpful for you?

How can you support someone else with change?

What can you do in the next 24 hours to apply these concepts?

What are your biggest barriers for change?